



CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

Transition Tips for parents of children with vision loss

The purpose of this document is to offer families of children with visual impairments/deafblindness some guidelines for effective transitions.

Assessment *A comprehensive assessment is the basis of determining eligibility for services and an effective educational plan*

In addition to ophthalmological and/or optometric evaluations and information provided by Early Intervention and school department assessments, professionals with expertise in vision loss should conduct a:

- Functional vision assessment (in addition for children with Cortical Visual Impairment use of a specific CVI Scale is recommended)
- Learning media assessment
- Developmental assessments (e.g. Oregon; INSITE)
- Orientation and mobility assessment
- Expanded Core Curriculum areas
- Collaborative assessment with EI and school personnel by TVI and/or TDB

Roles *Children with visual impairments including those with additional disabilities should have teachers and specialists on their assessment and services team with specialized training in visual impairments or deafblindness. Based upon your child's specialized needs, your child's team should include:*

- A Certified teacher of students with visual impairments and/or a teacher of the deafblind
- A Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist
- A Certified Low Vision Therapist

Successful transition practices include the following:

- Visit potential classrooms to understand the continuum of potential service options (see *Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2: Observation of Education Programs by Parents and Their Designees for Evaluation Purposes* regarding the rights of families to visit potential programs at www.ma.doe.us)
- Review of teacher certifications/experiences/philosophy of education of students with visual impairments or deafblindness

The following should be considered as part of the IEP and transition process:

- Environmental assessment of the placement by specialized personnel and incorporation of needed modifications
- Pre-visits to placement site by child with specialized personnel to orient them to space prior to attending
- Training for receiving school district staff on implications of the child's visual impairment for participation within all aspects of the class curriculum, related services and the life of the school
- Ordering of materials (e.g. American Printing House)
- Developing a communication plan for the family and the team to ensure skill crossover between home and school
- Plan how to introduce child to the class and facilitate interactions
- Consideration of organization and space needs for specialized materials or instruction
- Check last page of IEP for wording on degree of inclusive and/or pullout services

Where to find out more....

Perkins School for the Blind

www.perkins.org

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

www.mass.gov

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

www.mass.gov/dph

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education -

www.doe.mass.edu

**Continuing the Journey – Best Practices in Early Childhood Transition
Guide for Families**

www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/programs-licensing/special-needs/transition-guide.pdf

Massachusetts Association for Parents of the Visually Impaired

www.mapvi.org

National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments

www.napvi.org

Family Connect

www.FamilyConnect.org

Federation for Children with Special Needs

www.fcsn.org

A Parent's Guide to Special Education:

www.fcsn.org/parentguide/parentguide.pdf

Workshops on IEP development and basic rights:

www.fcsn.org/pti/workshops/home.php

American Foundation for the Blind

www.afb.org

American Printing House for the Blind

www.aph.org

**Association of Massachusetts Educators of Students with Visual
Impairments**

www.amesvi.org

Wonder Baby

www.wonderbaby.org

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

www.tsbvi.edu

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